RULES

OF THE

BAND SOCIETIES,

Drawn up *December* 25, 1738.

THE deſign of our meeting, is to obey that command of God, *Confeſs your faults one to another, and pray one for another, that you may be healed.*

To this end, we intend,

1. To meet once a week, at the leaſt.

2. To come punctually at the hour appointed, without ſome extraordinary reaſon.

3. To begin (thoſe of us who are preſent) exactly at the hour, with ſinging or prayer.

4. To ſpeak each of us in order, freely and plainly the true ſtate of our ſouls, with the faults we have committed in thought, word, or deed, and the temptations we have felt ſince our laſt meeting.

5. To

5. To end every meeting with prayer, ſuited to the ſtate of each perſon preſent.

6. To deſire ſome perſon among us to ſpeak his own ſtate firſt, and then to aſk the reſt in order, as many and as ſearching queſtions as may be, concerning their ſtate, ſins, and temptations.

Some of the queſtions propoſed to every one before he is admitted among us, may be to this effect.

1. Have you the forgiveneſs of your ſins?

2. Have you peace with God, through our Lord Jeſus Chriſt?

3. Have you the witneſs of God's Spirit with your ſpirit, that you are a child of God?

4. Is the love of God ſhed abroad in your heart?

5. Has no ſin, inward or outward, dominion over you?

6. Do you deſire to be told of your faults?

7. Do you deſire to be told of all your faults, and that plain and home?

8. Do you deſire, that every one of us ſhould tell you, from time to time, whatſoever is in his heart concerning you?

9. Conſider! Do you deſire we ſhould tell you whatſoever we think, whatſoever we fear, whatſoever we hear, concerning you?

10. Do you deſire, that in doing this, we ſhould come as cloſe as poſſible, that we ſhould cut to the quick, and ſearch your heart to the bottom?

11. Is it your deſire and deſign, to be on this and all other occaſions, entirely open, ſo as to ſpeak every thing that is in your heart without exception, without diſguiſe, and without reſerve.

Any of the preceding queſtions may be aſked as often as occaſion offers: the four following at every meeting:

1. What

1. What known ſins have you committed ſince our laſt meeting?
2. What temptations have you met with?
3. How was you delivered?
4. What have you thought, ſaid or done, of which you doubt whether it be ſin or not?

DIRECTIONS

GIVEN TO

The BAND SOCIETIES,

December 25, 1744.

YOU are ſuppoſed to have the *Faith that overcometh the world.* To you therefore it is not grievous,

I. Carefully to abſtain from doing evil: in particular,

1. Neither to *buy* or *ſell* any thing at all on the Lord's-Day.
2. To taſte no ſpirituous liquor, *no dram* of any kind, unleſs preſcribed by a phyſician.
3. To be *at a word*, both in buying and ſelling.
4. To *pawn nothing*, no not to ſave life.
5. Not to *mention the fault* of any *behind his back*, and to ſtop thoſe ſhort that do.
6. To wear no *needleſs ornaments*, ſuch as rings, ear-rings, necklaces, lace, ruffles.
7. To uſe no *needleſs ſelf-indulgence*, ſuch as taking ſnuff or tobacco, unleſs preſcribed by a phyſician.

II. Zealouſly

II. Zealouſly to maintain good works: in particular,

1. To *give alms* of ſuch things as you poſſeſs, and that to the uttermoſt of your power.

2. To *reprove* all that ſin in your ſight, and that in love, and meekneſs of wiſdom.

3. To be patterns of *diligence* and *frugality*, and *ſelf-denial*, and taking up the croſs daily.

III. Conſtantly to attend to all the ordinances of God: in particular,

1. To be at church, and at the Lord's table every week, and at every public meeting of the Bands.

2. To attend the miniſtry of the word every morning unleſs diſtance, buſineſs, or ſickneſs prevent.

3. To uſe private prayer every day, and family prayer, if you are the head of a family.

4. To read the ſcriptures, and meditate therein, at every vacant hour. And,

5. To obſerve, as days of faſting or abſtinence, all *Fridays* in the year.

The END.